

A L E T T E R

From *Artemiza* in the Town, to *Chloë* in the Country.

By a Person of H O N O U R.

C *Hloë*, in Verse, by your Command I write;
 Shortly you'll bid me ride astride, and fight.
 These Talents better with our Sex agree,
 Than lofty flights of dangerous Poetrie,
 Amongst the men, — I mean the men of Wit,
 At least that pass'd for such, before they writ.

How many bold Adventures for the Bays,
 Proudly designing large return of praise?
 Who durst that stormy pathless World explore,
 Were soon dash'd back, and wrackt on the dull shore,
 Broke of that little stock they had before.

How would a womans tottering Barque be tost,
 Where stoutest Ships (the men of Wit) are lost?
 When I reflect on this, I straight grow wise,
 And my own self thus gravely I advise:

Dear *Artemiza*, Poetry is a Snare,
 Bedlam has many Mansions, — have a care.
 Your Muse diverts you, makes the Reader sad;
 You fancie y^e are inspir'd, he thinks you mad.
 But like an Arrant woman, as I am
 No sooner well convinc'd, writing's a shame,
 That Whore is scarce a more reproachful name
 Than Poetess, —

Like Men that marry, or like Maids that woe,
 'Cause 'tis the very worst thing they can do,
 Pleas'd with the Contradiction and the Sin,
 Methinks I stand on Thorns till I begin:

Y^e expect to hear at least what Loves have past
 In this lewd Town, since you and I met last.

But how, my dearest *Chloë*, shall I set
 My Pen to write what I would fain forget;
 Or name that lost thing Love, without a tear,
 Since so debauch'd by ill-bred Customs here?

"Love, the most generous Passion of the Minde,
 "The softest Refuge Innocence can finde.

"The safe Director of unguided Youth,

"Fraught with kinde Wilhes, and secur'd by Truth.

"That Cordial drop Heaven in our Cup hath thrown,

"To make the nauseous Draught of Life go down.

"In which one onely Blessing God might raise,

"In Lands of Atheists, subsidies of praise:

"For none did e're so dull and stupid prove,

"But felt a God, and blest his power in Love.

This onely Joy for which poor We were made,

Is grown, like Play, to be an errant Trade.

The Rooks creep in, and it has got of late;

As many little Cheats and Tricks as that.

But what yet more a Womans heart would vex,

'Tis chiefly carri'd on by our own Sex.

Our silly Sex, who born like Monarchs free,

Turn Captives for a meaner Libertie,

And hate Restraint, though but from Infancie.

They call whatever is not common, nice,

And deaf to Natures Rules and Loves Advice,

Forake the Pleasure, to pursue the Vice.

To an exact perfection they have wrought

The Action Love; the Passion is forgot.

'Tis below Wit (they tell ye) to admire ;
 And ev'n without approving, they desire.
 Their private Wish obeys the publick Voice ;
 'Twixt good and bad, Whimsy decides, not Choice.
 Fashions grow up for tast ; at Forms they strike ;
 They know what they would have, not what they like.
 B----is a Beauty ; if some few agree
 To call him so, the rest to that degree }
 Affected are, that with their Ears they see.
 Where I was visiting the other night,
 Comes a fine Lady with her humble Knight,
 Who had prevail'd on her, through her own skill,
 At his Request, though much against her will,
 To come to *London*. ———
 As the Coach stoppt, we heard her Voice more loud
 Than a great-belly'd woman in a Croud,
 Telling the Knight that her Affairs require
 He for some hours obsequiously retire.
 I think she was asham'd to have him seen ; }
 Hard fate of Husbands the Gallant had been,
 (Though a diseas'd ill-favour'd fool) brought in.
 Dispatch (says she) that business you pretend,
 Your Beastly Visit to your drunken friend.
 A Bottle ever makes you look so fine,
 Methinks I long to smell you stink of Wine.
 Your Country-drinking breath's enough to kill
 Sowre Ale, corrected with a Lemon-pill.
 Prethee farewell, we'll meet again anon ;
 The necessary Thing bows and is gone.
 She flies up stairs, and all the haste does show,
 That fifty antick postures will allow.
 And thus burs out, Dear Madam, am not I
 The alter'd Creature breathing ? ---- Let me die,
 I finde my self ridiculously grown,
 Embarrassed with being out of Town.
 Rude and untaught, like any *Indian Queen*,
 My Country-nakedness is strangely seen.
 How is Love govern'd, Love that rules the State !
 And pray who are the men most worm of late ?
 When I was marri'd, Fools were A-la-mode ;
 The men of Wit were then held incommode.
 Slow in Belief, and fickle in Desire }
 Who, ere they'll be perswaded, must enquire,
 As if they came to spy, not to admire.
 With searching Wisdom, fatal to their ease,
 They still finde out why, what, may, should not please.
 Nay, take themselves for injur'd, when we dare
 Make 'em think better of us than we are.
 And if we hide our frailties from their sights,
 Call us deceitful Gilt, and Hypocrites.
 They little guess who at our Arts are griev'd,
 The perfect joy of being well deceiv'd.
 Inquisitive, as jealous Cuckolds grow, }
 Rather than not be knowing, they will know
 What, being known, creates their certain woe. }
 Woman should these (of all mankind) avoid ;
 For Wonder by clear Knowledge is destroy'd.
 Woman, who is an Errant Bird of Night, }
 (Bold in the Dusk before a Fools dull sight) }
 Should flie when Reason brings the glaring Light.
 But the kinde easie Fool, apt to admire }
 Himself, trusts us ; his follies all conspire }
 To flatter his, and favour our desire.
 Vain of his proper merit, he with ease,
 Believes we love him best, who best can please.

On him our gross dull common Flatties pass ;
 Ever most joyful, when most made an Ass.
 Heavy to apprehend ; though all mankind
 Perceives us false, the Fop concern'd is blinde ;
 Who doating on himself ———
 Thinks every one that sees him, of his minde.
 These are true womens men ; ——— here forc'd to cease
 Through want of breath, nor will she hold her peace.
 She to the window runs, where she had spi'd
 Her most esteem'd dear Friend the Monkie ty'd.
 With forty smiles, as many antick bows,
 As if't had been the Lady of the House,
 The dirty chattering Monster she embrac'd,
 And made it this fine tender Speech at last :
 " Kifs me, thou curious Minature of Man ;
 " How odde thou art, how pretty, how *Japan* !
 " Oh, I could live and die with thee ! ——— Then on,
 For half an hour in Complement she run.
 I took this time to think what Nature meant,
 When this mixt thing into the world she sent ;
 So very wise, yet so impertinent.
 One who knew every thing, whom God thought fit
 Should be an Ass through Choice, not want of Wit.
 Whose Foppery, without the help of Sense,
 Could ne'r have rose to such an Excellence.
 Nature's as lame in making a true Fop,
 As a Philosopher. ——— The very top
 And dignity of Folly we attain,
 By studious search, and labour of the Brain,
 By observation, counsel, and deep thought.
 God never made a Coxcomb worth a Groat ;
 We owe that Name to Industry and Arts ;
 An eminent Fool must be a Fool of Parts.
 And such a one was she, who had turn'd ore
 As many Books as Men ; lov'd much, read more :
 Had a discerning Wit ; to her was known
 Every ones fault or merit, but her own.
 And the good Qualities that ever blest
 A woman so distinguish'd from the rest,
 Except Discretion onely, the possest.
 But now, *Mon-cher*, --- dear Pugg (she cries) adieu ;
 And the Discourse broke off, does thus renew :
 You smile to see me (who the world, perchance,
 Mistakes to have some Wit) so far advance
 The Interest of Fools, that I approve
 Their Merit more than means of Wit in Love.
 But in our Sex too many proofs there are
 Of such who Wits undo, and Fools repair.
 This in my time was so receiv'd a Rule,
 Hardly a Wench in Town but had her Fool.
 The meanest common Slut, who long was grown
 The jest and scorn of every Pit-Buffoon,
 Had yet left Charms enough to have subdu'd
 Some Fop or other, fond to be thought lew'd.
 " A Woman's ne'r so wretched, but she can
 " Be still reveng'd on her undoer, Man.
 How lost soe're, she'll find some Lover more,
 A lewd abandon'd Fool, when she's a Whore.
 That wretched thing *Corinna*, who had run
 Through all the several ways of being undone ;
 Cozen'd at first by Love, and living then,
 By turning the too dear-bought tricks on men.
 Gay were the hours, and wing'd with joy they flew,
 When first the Town her early Beauties knew.
 Courted, admir'd, and lov'd, with Presents fed ;
 Youth in her looks, and Pleasure in her Bed :

Till Fate, or her ill Angel, thought it fit
 To make her doat upon a man of Wit.
 Who found 'twas dull to love above a day,
 Made his ill-natur'd Jest, and went away.
 Now scorn'd by all, forsaken, and oppress'd,
 She's a *Memento mori* to the rest.
 Poor Creature, who unheard-of, as a Flie,
 In some dark hole must all the Winter lie.
 Both want and dirt endure a whole half year,
 That for one month she---tawdry may appear.
 In *Easter-term* she gets her a new Gown,
 When my young Master's Worship comes to Town,
 From *Pedagogue* and Mother just set free,
 The Heir and hopes of a great Familie,
 Which with strong Ale and Beef the Country rules,
 And ever since the Conquest have been fools.
 And now with careful prospect to maintain
 This Character, lest crossing of the strain
 Should men the Booby-breed, his Friends provide
 A Cousin of his own for his fair Bride.
 And thus set out, —
 With an Estate, no Wit, and a new Wife,
 (The solid Comfort of a Coxcombs life)
 Dunghill and pease forsook, he comes to Town,
 Turns Spark, learns to be lewd, and is undone.
 Nothing sutes more with Vice than want of Sense;
 Fools are still wicked at their own Expence.
 This o'regrown School-boy, lost *Corinna* wins,
 And at first dash to make an Ass begins;
 Pretends to, like a man that has not known
 The Vanities nor Vices of the Town.
 Fresh in his Youth, and faithful in his Love,
 Eager of Joys which he doth seldom prove.
 Healthful and strong, he death no pains endure,
 But which the fair one he adores, can cure.
 Grateful for Favours does the Sex esteem,
 And Libels none for being kinde to him.
 Then of the Lewdness of the times complains;
 Rayls at the Wits, and Atheists: and maintains
 'Tis better than good Sense, than Power and Wealth,
 To have a long untainted Youth and Health.
 The unbred Puppy, that had never seen
 A Creature look so gay, or talk so fine,
 Believes, then falls in Love, and then in Debt,
 Mortgages all, even to the ancient Seat,
 To buy his Mistress a new house for life,
 To give her Plate and Jewels, robs his Wife.
 And when to height of Fondness he is grown,
 'Tis time to poison him, then all's her own.
 Thus meeting in her common arms his Fate,
 He leaves her Bastard Heir to his Estate.
 And as the Race of such an Owl deserves,
 His own dull lawful Progeny he starves.
 Nature (who never made a thing in vain,
 But does each interest to some end ordain)
 "Wisely contriv'd kinde-keeping Fools (no doubt)
 "To patch up Vices men of Wit wear out.
 Thus he run on two hours, some grains of Sense,
 Still mixt with follies of Impertinence.
 But now 'tis time I should some pity shew
 To *Chloë*, since I cannot chuse but know
 Readers must reap the dulness Writers sow. }
 By the next Post such Stories I shall tell,
 As joyn'd to these, shall to a Volume swell,
 (As true as Heaven) more infamous than Hell;
 But you are tir'd, and so am I. ----- Farewel.